

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Amended) A method of processing a customer claim against a manufacturer's product, said method includes the steps of:

inputting the claim through a computer to a database at a first management level;

determining the monetary value of the claim;

approving or denying the claim at the first management level when the monetary value of the claim is below a first predetermined level;

a second management level acting to review all claims input at the first management level and acting to approve or deny the claim when the monetary value of the claim is above the first predetermined level and below a second predetermined level; and

a third management level acting to review all claims input at the first and second management levels and acting to approve or deny the claim when the monetary value of the claim is above the second predetermined level.

2. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 1, which further includes the steps of:

providing a fourth management level to review all approved claims for accuracy and completeness and to inform the customer when a claim is denied and to inform an accounting management level when a claim has been approved and direct the accounting management level to reimburse the customer.

3. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the step of inputting a claim through a computer further includes the steps of accessing the corporate database through a computer connected to a corporate network, and opening a new record file for the customer claim.

4. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 3 wherein the step of accessing the corporate database through a computer connected to a corporate network further includes the step of entering a predetermined login name and a predetermined password to request access.

5. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 3 wherein the step of accessing the corporate database through a computer connected to a corporate network further includes the steps of accessing the internet through any capably equipped computer, electronically accessing a world wide web interface to the corporate network, and electronically connecting the computer to the corporate network through the internet and world wide web connections.

6. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 5 wherein the step of electronically connecting the computer to the corporate network through the internet and world wide web connections further includes the step of entering a predetermined login name and a predetermined password to request access.

7. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 6 wherein the step of inputting a claim through a computer further includes the step of selecting from a menu at least one operational link to another page for input of claim specific data.

8. (Original) A method of processing a customer claim as set forth in claim 1 wherein the steps of inputting an approval or denial of the claim further includes the steps of accessing the corporate database through a computer connected to a corporate network, and opening a new record file for the customer claim.

9. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 8 wherein the step of accessing the corporate database through a computer connected to a corporate network further includes the step of entering a predetermined login name and a predetermined password to request access.

10. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 8 wherein the step of accessing the corporate database through a computer connected to a corporate network further includes the steps of accessing the internet through any capably equipped computer, electronically accessing a world wide web interface to the corporate network, and electronically connecting the computer to the corporate network through the internet and world wide web connections.

11. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 10 wherein the step of electronically connecting the computer to the corporate network through the internet and world wide web connections further includes the step of entering a predetermined login name and a predetermined password to request access.

12. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 11 wherein the step of a second management level acting to review all claims input at the first management level further includes the step of selecting from a menu at least one operational link to another page to generate a list of all open claims.

13. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 12 wherein the step of a second management level acting to review all claims input at the first management level further includes the step of selecting one claim file from the list of all open claims to select a specific claim to review.

14. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 13 wherein the step of a second management level acting to approve or deny the claim further includes the step of selecting either an approve or a deny web page button to indicate the decision.

15. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 11 wherein the step of a third management level acting to review all claims input at the first and second management levels further includes the step of selecting from a menu at least one operational link to another page to generate a list of all open claims.

16. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 15 wherein the step of a third management level acting to review all claims input at the first and second management levels further includes the step of selecting one claim file from the list of all open claims to select a specific claim to review.

17. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 15 wherein the step of a third management level acting to approve or deny the claim further includes the step of selecting either an approve or a deny web page button to indicate the decision.

18. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 11 wherein the step of requiring a fourth management level to review all approved claims for accuracy and completeness further includes the steps of selecting from a menu at least one operational link to another page to generate a list of all open claims and selecting one claim file from the list of all open claims to select a specific claim to review.

19. (Amended) A method of processing a customer claim against a manufacturer's product when the claim is made for repair or replacement of the product after the expiration of a specified warranty period, said method includes the steps of:

inputting the claim through a computer to a database at a first management level;

determining the monetary value of the claim;

approving or denying the claim at the first management level when the monetary value of the claim is below a first predetermined level;

a second management level acting to review all claims input at the first management level and acting to approve or deny the claim when the monetary value of the claim is above the first predetermined level and below a second predetermined level;

a third management level acting to review all claims input at the first and second management levels and acting to approve or deny the claim when the monetary value of the claim is above the second predetermined level; and

providing a fourth management level to review all approved claims for accuracy and completeness and to inform the customer when a claim is denied and to inform an accounting management level when a claim has been approved and direct the accounting management level to reimburse the customer.

20. (Amended) A method of processing a customer claim against a manufacturer's product when the claim is made for ancillary costs arising from customer expenses associated with the servicing of the product while still within the manufacturer's specified warranty period, said method includes the steps of:

inputting the claim through a computer to a database at a first management level;

determining the monetary value of the claim;

approving or denying the claim at the first management level when the monetary value of the claim is below a first predetermined level;

a second management level acting to review all claims input at the first management level and acting to approve or deny the claim when the monetary value of the claim is above the first predetermined level and below a second predetermined level;

a third management level acting to review all claims input at the first and second management levels and acting to approve or deny the claim when the monetary value of the claim is above the second predetermined level; and

providing a fourth management level to review all approved claims for accuracy and completeness and to inform the customer when a claim is denied and to inform an accounting management level when a claim has been approved and direct the accounting management level to reimburse the customer.